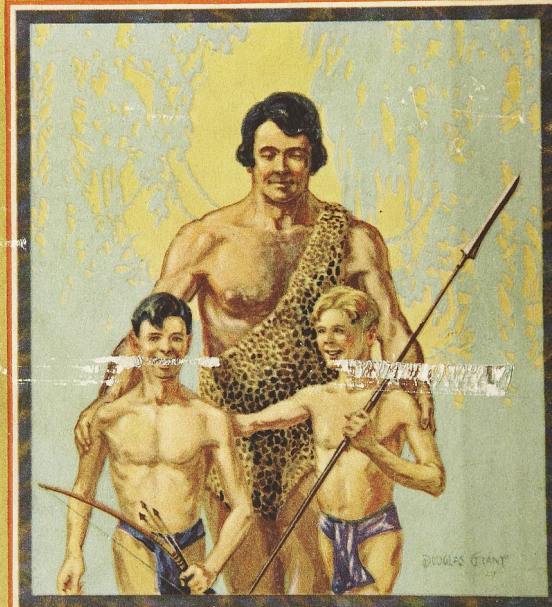
THE TARZAN TWINS

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS



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Edgar Rice Burroughs

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About Burroughs:

Edgar Rice Burroughs (September 1, 1875 – March 19, 1950) was an American author, best known for his creation of the jungle hero Tarzan, although he also produced works in many genres. Source: Wikipedia

Also available on Feedbooks for Burroughs:

- *Tarzan of the Apes* (1912)
- *A Princess of Mars* (1912)
- *The Gods of Mars* (1918)
- *A Fighting Man of Mars* (1930)
- *The Warlord of Mars* (1918)
- *The Chessmen of Mars* (1922)
- *John Carter and the Giant of Mars* (1940)
- *Thuvia Maid of Mars* (1920)
- *Swords of Mars* (1934)
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Introduction

The Tarzan Twins, like all well-behaved twins, were born on the same day and, although they were not as "alike as two peas," still they resembled one another quite closely enough to fulfil that particular requirement of twinship; but even there they commenced breaking the rules that have been governing twins during the past several millions of years, for Dick had a shock of the blackest sort of black hair, while Doc's hair was the sunny hue of molasses candy. Their noses were alike, their blue eyes were alike; alike were their chins and their mouths. Perhaps Doc's eyes twinkled more and his mouth smiled more than Dick's for Dick did much of his twinkling and smiling inside and inside the boys were very much alike, indeed. But in one respect they shattered every rule that has been laid down for twins from the very beginning of time, for Dick had been born in England and Doc in America; a fact which upsets everything right at the beginning of the story and proves, without any shadow of a doubt, that they were not twins at all.

Why then did they look so much alike and why did everyone call them the Tarzan Twins? One could almost start a guessing contest with a conundrum like this, but the trouble is that no one would guess the correct solution, though the answer is quite simple. Dick's mother and Doc's mother were sisters—twin sisters—and they looked so much alike that they looked more alike than two peas, and as each boy resembled his mother—the result was—they resembled each other. Their mothers were American girls. One of them married an American and stayed at home—that was Doc's mother; and the other married an Englishman and sailed away to live on another continent in another hemisphere—and she was Dick's mother. When the boys were old enough to go away to school their parents had a brilliant idea, which was that the boys should receive half of their education in America and half in England. And this story will prove that the best laid plans of mice and mothers sometimes go wrong, for no one planned that the boys should get any of their education in Africa, whereas, as a matter of fact, Fate was arranging that they should learn more in the jungles of the Dark Continent than was ever between the covers of any school book.

When they were fourteen years old, Dick and Doc were attending an excellent English school where there were a great many future dukes and earls and arch-bishops and lord mayors, who, when they saw how much Dick and Doc resembled one another, called them "The Twins." Later, when they learned that Dick's father was distantly related to Lord Greystoke, who is famous all over the world as Tarzan of the Apes, the boys commenced to call Dick and Doc, "The Tarzan Twins"—so that is how the nickname grew and became attached to them.

As everyone knows tar means white in the language of the great apes, and go means black, so Doc, with his light hair, was known as Tarzan-tar and Dick, whose hair was black, was called Tarzan-go. It was all right to be called Tarzan-tar and Tarzan-go, until the other boys began to make fun of them because they could climb trees no better than many another boy and, while they were fair in athletic sports, they did not excel. It was right there and then that Dick and Doc decided that they would live up to their new names, for they did not enjoy being laughed at and made fun of, any more than any other normal, red-blooded boy does. It is simply staggering to discover what a boy can accomplish if he makes up his mind to it and so it was not long before Dick and Doc did excel in nearly all athletic sports and when it came to climbing trees—well, Tarzan himself would have had no reason to be ashamed of them. Though their scholastic standing may have suffered a little in the following months of athletic effort, their muscles did not, and as vacation time approached, Dick and Doc had become as hard as nails and as active as a couple of manus, which you will know, if your education has not been neglected, is the ape-word for monkeys.

Then it was that the big surprise came in a letter that Dick received from his mother. Tarzan of the Apes had invited them all to visit him and spend two months on his great African estate! The boys were so excited that they talked until three o'clock the next morning and flunked in all their classes that day. The disappointment that followed later when it was learned that Dick's father, who was an army officer, could not get leave of absence and Dick's mother would not go without him; the letters and cablegrams that were exchanged between England and America, and England and Africa; the frantic appeals of the boys to their parents are interesting only in the result they effected; which was that the boys

were to go by themselves, Tarzan of the Apes having promised to meet them at the end of the railway with fifty of his own Waziri warriors, thus assuring their safe passage through savage Africa to the far-away home of the ape-man. And this brings us to the beginning of our story.

Chapter 1

A train wound slowly through mountains whose rugged slopes were green with verdure and out across a rolling, grassy veldt, tree dotted. From a carriage window, two boys, eager-eyed, excited, kept constant vigil. If there was anything to be seen they were determined not to miss it, and they knew that there should be many things to see.

"I'd like to know where all the animals are," said Dick, wearily. "I haven't seen a blamed thing since we started."

"Africa's just like all the one horse circuses," replied Doc. "They advertise the greatest collection of wild animals in captivity and when you get there all they have is a mangy lion and a couple of motheaten elephants."

"Golly! Wouldn't you like to see a real lion, or an elephant, or something?" sighed Dick.

"Look! Look!" exclaimed Doc suddenly. "There! There! See 'em?"

In the distance a small herd of springbok ran swiftly and gracefully across the veldt, the dainty little animals occasionally leaping high into the air. As the animals disappeared the boys again relapsed into attitudes of watchful waiting.

"I wish they'd been lions," said Dick.

The train, deserting the open country, entered a great forest, dark, gloomy, mysterious. Mighty trees, festooned with vines, rose from a tangle of riotous undergrowth along the right-of-way, hiding

everything that lay beyond that impenetrable wall of flower-starred green,—a wall that added to the mystery of all that imagination could picture of the savage life moving silently behind it. There was no sign of life. The forest seemed like a dead thing. The monotony of it, as the hours passed, weighed heavily upon the boys.

"Say," said Doc, "I'm getting tired of looking at trees. I'm going to practice some of my magic tricks. Look at this one, Dick."

He drew a silver coin from his pocket, a shilling, and held it upon his open palm. "Ladies and gentlemen!" he declaimed. "We have here an ordinary silver shilling, worth twelve pence. Step right up and examine it, feel of it, bite it! You see that it is gen-u-ine. You will note that I have no accomplices. Now, ladies and gentlemen, watch me closely!"

He placed his other palm over the coin, hiding it, clasped his hands, blew upon them, raised them above his head.

"Abacadabra! Allo, presto, change ears and be gone! Now you see it, now you don't!" He opened his hands and held them palms up. The coin had vanished.

"Hurray!" shouted Dick, clapping his hands, as he had done a hundred times before, for Dick was always the audience.

Doc bowed very low, reached out and took the coin from Dick's ear, or so he made it appear. Then into one clenched fist, between the thumb and first finger, he inserted the stub of a lead pencil, shoving it down until it was out of sight. "Abacadabra! Allo! Presto! Change cars and be gone! Now you see it, now you don't!" Doc opened his hand and the pencil was gone.

"Hurray!" shouted Dick, clapping his hands, and both boys broke into laughter.

For an hour Doc practiced the several sleight of hand tricks he had mastered and Dick pretended to be an enthusiastic audience; anything was better than looking out of the windows at the endless row of silent trees.

Then, quite suddenly and without the slightest warning, the monotony was broken. Something happened. Something startling happened. There was a grinding of brakes. The railway carriage in which they rode seemed to leap into the air; it lurched and rocked and bumped, throwing both boys to the floor, and then, just as they were sure it was going to overturn, it came to a sudden stop, quite

as though it had run into one of those great, silent trees.

The boys scrambled to their feet and looked out of the windows; then they hastened to get out of the car and when they reached the ground outside they saw excited passengers pouring from the train, asking excited questions, getting in everyone's way. It did not take Dick and Doc long to learn that the train, striking a defective rail, had run off the track and that it would be many hours before the journey could be resumed. For a while they stood about with the other passengers idly looking at the derailed carriages but this diversion soon palled and they turned their attention toward the jungle. Standing quietly upon the ground and looking at it was quite different from viewing it through the windows of a moving train. It became at once more interesting and more mysterious.

"I wonder what it is like in there," remarked Dick.

"It looks spooky," said Doc.

"I'd like to go in and see," said Dick.

"So would I," said Doc.

"There isn't any danger—we haven't seen a thing that could hurt a flea since we landed in Africa."

"And we wouldn't go in very far."

"Come on," said Dick.

"Hi, there!" called a man's voice. "Where you boys goin'?"

They turned to see one of the train guards who chanced to be passing.

"Nowhere," said Doc.

"Well whatever you do, don't go into the jungle," cautioned the man, moving on toward the head of the train.

"You'd be lost in no time."

"Lost!" scoffed Dick. "He must think we're a couple of zanies."

Now that someone had told them that they must not go into the jungle, they wanted to go much more than they had before, but as there were many people upon this side of the train, they were quite sure that someone else would stop them, should they attempt to enter the jungle in plain view of passengers and train crew.

Slowly they sauntered to the rear end of the train and passed around it onto the opposite side. There was no one here and right in

front of them was what appeared to be an opening through the tangled vegetation that elsewhere seemed to block the way into that mysterious hinterland that lay beyond the solid ranks of guardian trees. Dick glanced quickly up and down the train. There was no one in sight.

"Come on," he said, "let's just take a little peek."

It was only a step to the opening, which proved to be a narrow path that turned abruptly to the right after they had followed it a few paces. The boys stopped and looked back. The right-of-way, the train, the passengers —all were as completely hidden from view as though they had been miles and miles away, but they could still hear the hum of voices. Ahead the little path turned toward the left and the boys advanced, just to look around the turn; but beyond the turn was another. The path was a very winding one, turning and twisting its way among the boles of huge trees; it was quiet and dark and gloomy.

"Perhaps we'd better not go in too far," suggested Doc.

"Oil, let's go a little way farther," urged Dick. "We can always turn around and follow the path back to the train. Maybe we'll come to a native village. Gee! wouldn't that be great?"

"Suppose they were cannibals?"

"Oh, shucks! There aren't any cannibals any more. You afraid?"

"Who me? Of course I'm not afraid," said Doc, valiantly. "All right then, come ahead," and Dick led the way along the little path that bored into the depths of the mighty, frowning jungle. A bird with brilliant plumage flew just above them, giving them a little start, so silent and deserted the forest had seemed, and a moment later the little path led them into a wide, well-beaten trail. "Golly!" exclaimed Doc, "this is more like it. Say, I could scarcely breathe in that little path."

"Sst! Look!" whispered Dick, pointing.

Doc looked and saw a little monkey solemnly surveying them from the branch of a nearby tree. Presently it began to chatter and a moment later it was joined by a second and then a third little monkey. As the boys approached the monkeys retreated, still chattering and scolding. They were cute little fellows and Dick and Doc followed in an effort to get closer, and, all the time, more and more monkeys appeared. They ran through the trees, jumping from

branch to branch; skipping about, jabbering excitedly.

"If my cousin, Tarzan of the Apes, were here, he'd know just what they were saying," said Dick.

"Let's get him to teach us," suggested Doc. "Wouldn't it be fun to be able to talk to the animals, the way he does? Gee! I wish they'd let us get a little closer."

On and on the boys went, their whole attention absorbed by the antics of the little monkeys; forgetting time and distance, trains, passengers; forgetting all the world in this wonderful experience of seeing hundreds of real, live monkeys living their own natural life in the jungle, just as their forefathers had lived for ages and ages. How tame and uninteresting and pathetic seemed the poor little monkeys that they had seen in zoos. The boys passed several little trails running into the bigger one, but so wholly was their attention held by the antics of their new friends that they did not notice these, nor did they note a branch of the big trail that came in behind them from their left while they were watching some of the monkeys in the trees at their right.

Perhaps they were not very far from the train. They did not think about it at once, for their minds were occupied with more interesting things than trains. Presently, however, as they followed the winding of the broad game trail, laughing at the antics of the monkeys and trying to make friends with them, a still, small voice seemed to whisper something into the ear of Dick. It was that old spoilsport, Conscience, and what it said was: "Better start back! Better start back!" Dick glanced at his watch.

"Gee!" he exclaimed. "Look what time it is! We'd better start back."

And then Doc looked at his watch. "Golly!" he cried; "I'll say we ought to start back, it's almost dinner time. How far do you suppose we've come?"

"Oh, not very far," replied Dick, but his tone was not very positive.

"Say, I'll bet it would be great in here at night," cried Doc.

Just at that instant, from the heart of the jungle, a sound broke the peace of the forest—a terrible sound that started with a coughing noise and grew in volume until it became a terrific roar that made the ground tremble. Instantly the little monkeys

disappeared as though by magic and a silence, more fearful than the awful voice, settled upon the dark and gloomy wood. Instinctively the boys drew close together, looking fearfully in the direction from which that fearsome sound had come. They were brave boys; but brave men tremble when that voice breaks the silence of an African night.

Little wonder, then, that they turned and fled into the direction from which they had come, away from the author of that rumbling roar.

And, still running, they came to the fork in the trail, the fork that they had passed, careless and unheeding, a short time before. Here they were bewildered and here they hesitated. But only for a moment. They were young and possessed all the assurance of youth, so off they went again running swiftly along the wrong trail.

Chapter 2

Numa, the lion, hunted through the jungle primeval. He was not ravenously hungry, as only the night before he had finished devouring the kill he had made two days ago. However, it would do no harm to rove the jungle for a few hours and mark down a new prey even before the pangs of hunger became sharp. As he moved majestically along the familiar game trail, he made no effort to hide his presence, for was he not the king of beasts? Who was there to dispute his supreme power? Of whom need he be afraid?

Perhaps these very thoughts were in the mind of Numa, when, borne upon the air that moved down the tunnel-like trail, a scent filled his nostrils that brought him to a sudden stop. It was the scent that ever aroused hatred in the heart of Numa—it was the scent of man! Perhaps it aroused hatred because of the fact that it engendered a little fear as well, though fear was something that the king could not admit. But there was something strange, something a little different in this scent than in anything he had ever noticed in the scent spoor of the gomangani. It differed from the scent spoor of the negro quite as much as their scent differed from that of the mangani, or great apes. He was sure then that it was neither gomangani, the black man or (great black ape), or mangani, whose odor was wafted down to him; but of one thing Numa was certain, the odor was that of man, and so he moved along the trail, but more carefully now, his great, padded feet making no sound. Once, in the freshness of his first anger, he had roared forth his challenge;

now he was silent. When he came to the spot where the boys had stopped before they turned back, he paused and sniffed the air, his tail moving nervously from side to side; then he started at a trot along their trail, head flattened and every sense alert. The great muscles moving in supple waves beneath his tawny hide, his tufted tail held just above the ground, his black mane rippling in the gentle breeze, Numa, the lion, followed the scent spoor of his prey. Dick and Doc were used to long cross-country runs, for many were the paper chases in which they had taken part, and now they were glad that they had developed their muscles and their lungs in clean, out-door exercise, for though they had run now for a long distance, they were neither tired nor out of breath. However, they slowed down to a walk as each was already troubled with the same doubt. It was Doc who first voiced it.

"I didn't think we'd come this far," he said. "Do you suppose we passed the little path leading to the railway, without seeing it?"

"I don't know," replied Dick, "but it certainly seems as though we had come back a whole lot further than we went in. But then, of course, you said it would be great to spend the night in here," he added.

"Well, it would," insisted Doc; "but it wouldn't be very nice to have the train go off and leave us here, forever, and that's just what it may do, if we don't get back to it pretty soon. Let's go on a little way, then if we don't find the path, we'll turn around and go back and try the other fork of the trail."

"What do you suppose made that noise?" asked Dick, presently, as they walked along, peering anxiously into the dense wall of jungle for the opening that they hoped would lead them back to the train. It was the first time that either of them had mentioned the cause of their fright; partly because they had been too busy running and partly because each of them was a little ashamed of his headlong flight.

"Sounded like a lion," said Doc.

"That's what I thought," said Dick.

"Why didn't you wait and see then?" demanded his cousin. "On the train this morning, you said you'd like to see a real lion."

"I didn't see you waiting," Dick shot back. "I guess you were afraid, all right. I never saw anyone run so fast in my life."

"I had to, to keep up with you," replied Doc. "Anyhow, I hadn't lost a lion. Who wants an old lion, anyway?"

"I guess yon don't, fraidy-cat."

"Fraidy-cat nothing," replied Doc. "I'm not afraid of any old lion. All you got to do is look 'em right in the eye, an'—"

"And what?"

"An' they put their tail between their legs and beat it."

"An umbrella's a good thing to frighten a lion with," offered Dick.

"Say, look at that big rock!" exclaimed Doc, pointing to a vine covered, rocky outcropping, around which the rail disappeared just ahead.

"We didn't pass anything like that when we came in."

"No," admitted Dick, "we didn't. That means that we are sure enough on the wrong trail. Let's turn around and go back to the other fork."

Together they turned to retrace their steps. Before them the trail ran quite straight for almost a hundred yards, and there, just at the end of it, a great black-maned lion emerged into full view. Dick and Doc stood frozen in their tracks and the lion stopped, too, and surveyed them. It seemed a very long time to the boys that they stood there, but it really could have been only a moment. Then the lion opened his mouth in the most terrific roar those boys had ever heard in all their lives, and, still roaring, moved toward them.

"Quick! the trees!" whispered Dick, as though fearful that the lion would overhear him.

As the boys sprang for the nearest tree Numa broke into a trot. It was then that Doc caught his toe beneath a root and fell headlong to the ground. The lion seemed very near, yet Dick turned back and seizing Doc helped him to his feet. All instant later, as the lion charged in real earnest, at a terrific speed, the boys were clambering swiftly into the lower branches of a great tree that overspread the trail. Roaring angrily, Numa sprang into the air, his mighty talons unsheathed to seize and drag them down. He missed them, but by a margin so narrow that one of his claws touched the heel of Dick's shoe. With an agility far beyond their own dreams Dick and Doc climbed high above the menace of the angry beast of prey, finally seating themselves upon a limb that projected above

the trail. Beneath them the lion stood glaring up, with round, yellow-green, blazing eyes. He was growling angrily, exposing yellow fangs that made them shudder.

"Why didn't you look him in the eye?" demanded Dick.

"I was goin' to, but he wouldn't stand still," replied Doc. "Why didn't you bring an umbrella?"

Numa, nervous, irritable, did not relish the idea of losing his supper now that he had discovered a quarry of two young and tender tarmangani, for if there is anything that Numa relishes, even before old age has reduced him to a diet of human flesh, it is the young of the man-tribe. Therefore, as long as they were in sight he did not give up hope. Seldom did Numa, the lion, have reason to envy his cousin Sheeta, the panther; but this was most certainly such an occasion, for could he have climbed with the agility of Sheeta, the prey would soon have been his. Not being able to climb into the tree after his supper he did the next best thing, which was to lie down and wait for it to descend.

Of course if Numa had had the brains of a man he would have known that the boys would not come down while he lay there waiting for them. Perhaps he hoped that they would fall asleep and tumble out of the tree. And it may be that after a while he really did reason the thing out almost as a man would have reasoned it, for after half an hour of waiting he arose and strode majestically back along the trail in the direction from which he had come; but just around the first turn he halted, wheeled about and lay down just out of sight of his intended victims.

"I believe he's gone," whispered Dick. "Let's wait a few minutes and then climb down and see if we can find the path. It can't be so very far from here."

"If we wait very long it will be dark," said Doc.

"Do you suppose they could hear us if we yelled?" asked Dick.

"If they did hear us and came in, the lion might get them."

"I never thought of that—no, we mustn't yell." Dick scratched his head in thought. "There must be some way out of this," he continued. "We can't stay here forever—even if you do think it would be nice to spend the night in the jungle."

"If we climb down we may run right into that old lion and we

haven't got an umbrella, or anything," said Doc, grinning.

"I've got it!" cried Dick. "I've got it! Why didn't we think of it before?"

"Think of what?"

"Why, swinging through the trees like Tarzan! He didn't come down to the ground when a lion was after him, if he didn't want to—he just swung through the trees. Why can't we swing through the trees right back to the train?"

"Gee!" exclaimed Doc. "That's a great idea. I'll bet they'll be surprised when we come swinging through the trees and drop right down in front of them."

"And I guess their eyes won't stick out like two peeled onions or anything when we tell 'em we were chased by a lion," added Dick.

"Come on then! Which way is the train?"

"This way," and Dick led off at right angles to the trail, working his way carefully along the limb of the tree, seeking carefully foothold below and handhold above.

"I don't call that swinging," said Doc.

"Well, smarty, let's see you swing."

"You're Tarzan's cousin—if you can't do it how do you expect me to?"

"Well," explained Dick, "I've got to practice a little bit, haven't I? You don't expect a fellow to do it the first thing off without a little practice, do you?"

But at the moment Doc was too busy worming his way gingerly after Dick to think up a suitable reply. From one tree to another they made their way and as they progressed they soon became more sure of themselves and their pace increased accordingly. By chance Dick had started in the right direction. The train lay directly ahead of them, though further away than either would have imagined; but following a straight line through the trees of a dense forest where there are no land marks to guide one and where the sun is not visible as a beacon of safety is a thing not easily done. It was not at all strange, therefore, that within the first hundred yards Dick had so altered his original course that the boys were moving at a right angle to the proper direction and within the next hundred had turned almost completely back and were "swinging" directly away

from the railway. A few minutes later they crossed the wide game trail they had so recently left, but so thick was the foliage beneath them that they did not see the trail at all, and they were still bravely travelling their perilous path when the sudden tropical night shut down upon the jungle, engulfing them in its black folds.

Below them a lion roared. Out of the black void rose the weird scream of a panther. Something moved in the trees above them. The night life of the jungle was awakening with its sounds of stealthily moving bodies, with its terrifying noises, with its awful silences.

Chapter 3

A new day burst gorgeously into life. A brilliant sun shone down upon the leafy canopy of green that roofed the great forest; but far beneath all was dark and gloomy still. A sleek, black warrior moved silently along a jungle trail. On his back he carried a small, oval shield, his bow and his quiver filled with arrows. Bracelets of iron and of copper encircled his arms. Through the septum of his nose, which had been pierced to receive it, was a cylindrical piece of wood, six or eight inches in length; from the lobes of his ears depended heavy ornaments; necklaces encircled his ebon throat and there were many metal bands and anklets upon his legs; his hair was plastered thick with mud into which he had stuck several gaudy feathers. His teeth were filed to sharp points. In one hand he bore a light hunting spear. He was Zopinga, a Mugalla of the Bagalla tribe that was all-powerful in Ugalla, the dismal forest country they claimed as theirs. Thus early in the morning Zopinga was making the round of the snares he had set the previous day.

In the crotch of a mighty jungle giant, two boys, chilled, miserable, awoke from a fitful slumber. All night they had huddled close together for such warmth as they might lend each other; but they had been very cold. They had slept little. The mysterious voices of the jungle night, the consciousness of the nearby presence of creatures they could not see had driven sleep from their eyes until, finally, overcome by utter exhaustion, they had sunk into all unconsciousness that could scarcely be called sleep, and even from

this, the cold and discomfort aroused them, shortly after daybreak.

"Golly," said Dick, "I sure am cold!"

"You haven't got anything on me," replied Doc.

"It must be great in the jungle at night," said Dick, with a sickly grin.

"It wasn't so bad," insisted Doc, bravely.

"So bad as what?" asked Dick.

"I'll bet you none of the other boys ever stayed out in a tree all night, with lions and panthers and tigers prowling all around in the jungle below. Just wait till we get home and tell them. Gee, I'll bet they'll be sore to think they weren't along."

"There aren't any tigers in Africa," corrected Dick, "and anyone who wants to stay out in the jungle all night can have my place. I wish I were home in my own bed—that's what I wish."

"Cry-baby!"

"I am not. I just have some sense, that's all. It's cold here and I'm hungry."

"So am I," admitted Doc. "Let's build a fire and get warm and cook breakfast."

"How you going to build a fire and what you going to cook for breakfast? You going to say 'Abacadabra, allo presto, change cars!' and then pick a gas range out of my ear? And if you could, what would you cook on it? Ham and eggs and waffles? That wouldn't do, because we haven't any of the maple syrup you are always talking about and cook forgot the marmalade."

"You think you're funny!" snapped Doc. "But I'll show you—I'll build a fire all right."

"Where are your matches?"

"I don't need any matches."

"How you going to build a fire without matches?"

"That's easy. All you got to do is rub two sticks together."

Dick was interested. "That's right," he said. "Come on, let's go down and get a fire started. Golly, but wouldn't it be great to be warm again?"

"I wouldn't care if I got on fire," said Doc, "only I'm so cold I don't

think I'd burn."

"We could melt—that's better than staying frozen."

"Do you suppose it's safe to go down?" inquired Doc. "Do you suppose that old lion has gone home?"

"We could stay close to a tree and one of us could watch all the time," suggested Dick.

"All right, here goes! Gee, but I'm stiff. Whew! My joints need oiling."

Once at the bottom of the tree Doc collected a little pile of twigs and taking two of the larger ones he commenced rubbing them together vigorously, while Dick watched and listened, ready to sound the alarm at the first sign of danger. Doc rubbed and rubbed and rubbed.

"What's the matter with your old fire?" demanded Dick.

"I don't know," said Doc. "All the books I've ever read about savages and desert islands and people like that, tell how they build their fires by rubbing two sticks together."

"Maybe you aren't rubbing fast enough," suggested Dick.

"I'm rubbing as fast as I can. Maybe you think this is fun. Well, it isn't. It's hard work." He kept on rubbing and rubbing for several minutes. Finally he stopped, exhausted.

"What you stopping for?" demanded Dick.

"The old sticks won't burn," replied Doc, disgustedly, "and anyway I've rubbed so fast that I've got warm."

Satisfied that there was something wrong with their fire-making, they decided to warm themselves by exercise, knowing that a good, brisk run would set the blood to tingling in their veins; but then the question arose as to the direction in which they should run, as well as a place where they might find room in which to run. The tangled undergrowth grew close around them. Nothing could run in that. They had no idea where the trail was. There was nothing left, therefore, but the trees, and so they clambered back to the lower branches and with stiff fingers and numb joints started once more in the direction they thought would lead them to the railway.

As they moved forward, they commenced to feel the reviving influence of renewed warmth and life. But as they forgot the cold, they became more conscious of their hunger and now thirst was

adding to their discomfort. They heard the sounds of the smaller life of the jungle, and occasionally caught fleeting glimpses of beautifully colored birds. A small monkey came and ran along above their heads and his chattering attracted others, until soon there were many monkeys around them. They did not seem very much afraid of the boys, nor were they unfriendly. They were merely curious. And they were always eating; a fact which drove the boys nearly crazy with hunger.

They watched carefully to discover what the monkeys ate, for they knew that what the monkeys ate with safety, they might eat; but when they discovered that the bill-of-fare appeared to consist quite largely of caterpillars they changed their minds. After a while they saw one of the monkeys gather fruit from a tree and eat it with great relish and they lost no time in clambering up into the branches of that same tree and searching for more of the fruit. It did not taste very good, but it was food and stopped the gnawing pangs of hunger, and its juices helped to satisfy their thirst.

When they had eaten they continued their search for the railway and found it easier to travel through the trees though they were, as yet, far from perfect at it. The food had given them renewed hope and they were quite sure now that they would soon reach the twin bands of steel that would mean rescue, for even if their train had left, there would be other trains along, which would surely stop at sight of two white boys. They might not have felt so much confidence had they dreamed that they were travelling deeper and deeper into the forest, directly away from the railway. Dick, who was in the lead, suddenly voiced an exclamation of satisfaction and relief.

"Here's the old trail!" he cried. "Now we can make some time."

"Gee, but it's good to get your old feet on the ground again," said Doc as the two boys stood again on solid footing. "Come on! Now let's beat it."

With brisk steps they set off along the game trail that ran in the same general direction they had been travelling, positive now that they were on the right road. Doc, his spirits rising to the occasion, broke into a gay whistle.

Ahead of them Zopinga came to an abrupt halt. For an instant he stood, listening intently, then he dropped to his hands and knees

and placed his ear against the ground and remained there for a moment, motionless. When he arose, he still remained in a listening attitude, straining every faculty to interpret the sounds that were approaching him along the trail. Just before the boys came into sight the savage warrior stepped into the green wall of the jungle trail. The leaves and branches dropped back, forming an impenetrable screen behind which Zopinga waited.

The boys came confidently on, while Zopinga adjusted his shield upon his left forearm and took a new grip upon his light hunting spear.

The warrior did not see the boys until they were almost opposite him but when he did, the grasp of his spear hand released and a look of relief and satisfaction overspread his black and evil countenance, for he saw that he had nothing to fear from two unarmed white boys. He waited until a turn in the trail took them from his view, then he stepped out into the trail and followed them.

Zopinga was greatly elated. What matter now that his snares had failed to entrap a single victim? Had they all been filled, the reward would not have equalled this windfall that had come to him without the slightest effort upon his part. The victims of his snares he would have had to carry home; but this new quarry walked upon their own legs and, most accommodatingly, were headed directly for the village of the Bagalla.

Chapter 4

"We must be pretty near the train by this time," said Dick; "unless —"

"Unless what?" demanded Doc.

"We might not be on the right trail," suggested the other. "We might be lost after all."

"Gee, don't say that, Dick. If we're lost now, we'll never find our way out. We'll have to stay in this jungle until we—"

"Until we what?"

"I don't like to say it."

"You mean until we die?"

Doc nodded his head and the boys moved on in silence, each intent upon his own gloomy thoughts. Behind them, just out of sight, came the black warrior, Zopinga. Presently Doc stopped.

"Dick!" he cried. "Do you smell something?"

Dick sniffed the air. "Smells like smoke," he said.

"It is smoke," exclaimed Doc, "and I can smell food cooking, too.

"We're saved, Dick! We're saved! It's the train! Come on!" and both boys broke into a run.

A hundred yards of brisk running brought them to a sudden stop. Before them lay a clearing in the forest at the trail's end. In the centre of the clearing was a palisade of poles surrounding an enclosure. Above the top of the palisade they could see the cone-

shaped roofs of grass-thatched huts and, through the open gates that faced them, they could see the huts themselves and half-naked black people moving about. Outside the palisade some women were hoeing in a little patch of cultivated ground.

Dick and Doc took one look at the scene before them before they faced one another in silent consternation. So different from what they had expected had been this outcome of their hopes that both boys were shocked into utter speechlessness for a moment. It was Doc, as usual, who first regained control of his tongue.

"We're lost, after all," he said. "What are we going to do?"

"Maybe they're friendly natives," suggested Dick.

"Maybe they're cannibals," suggested Doc.

"I don't believe there are any cannibals any more," said Dick.

"I don't intend to take any chances on that. There may be."

"Let's sneak back the way we came then," whispered Dick. "They haven't seen us yet."

Simultaneously the two boys turned to retrace their steps and there, blocking the trail they had just trod, stood a huge, black warrior scowling savagely at them. In his hand was a sharp spear.

"Golly!" exclaimed Dick.

"Gee!" ejaculated Doc. "What shall we do?"

"We ought to be nice to him," said Dick.

"Good morning!" said Doc, politely, with a smile that was nothing if not strained. "Nice morning, isn't it?"

Zopinga, who had stood silent thus far, now broke into a torrent of words, not one of which the boys understood. When he had ceased, he again stood immovable.

"Well," remarked Dick, casually, "I guess we'd better be getting along back to the train. Come on, Doc," and he started to move along the trail past Zopinga. Instantly the sharp point of the spear was at the pit of his stomach.

Dick stopped. Zopinga pointed toward the village with his left hand and prodded Dick with his spear.

"I guess he's inviting us to lunch," suggested Doc.

"Whatever he's inviting us to do, I guess we'd better do it," said Dick.

Reluctantly the two boys turned toward the village; behind them walked Zopinga, proudly herding his captives in the direction of the gates. At sight of them the women and children working in the fields clustered about, jabbering excitedly. The women were hideous creatures whose ears and lower lips were horribly disfigured, the lobes of the former having evidently been pierced during their youth to receive heavy ornaments which had stretched the flesh until the lower part of the ear touched the shoulder, while their teeth, like those of Zopinga, were filed to sharp points, though fortunately for the peace of mind of Dick and Doc, neither boy understood the significance of this.

Some of the children threw stones and sticks at the boys and each time a hit was scored, Zopinga and the women and all the children laughed uproariously. Encouraged and emboldened by this applause one of the older children, a particularly hideous boy, rushed at Doc from the rear and swung a blow at his head with a heavy stick. Dick, while attempting to ward off the missiles that were rained upon him, had fallen a few steps behind Doc, which proved a very fortunate circumstance for his cousin as the black boy would have cracked Doc's skull if the blow had landed squarely upon its target.

Even as the little fiend was in the act of swinging the cudgel Dick leaped in front of him and seizing his wrist with his left hand dealt the youth a blow in the face with his right fist that sent him sprawling upon his back.

Doc turned just in time to witness Dick's act, though he did not fully realize how close and how grave had been his peril, and the two boys instinctively drew together, back to back, for mutual protection, as each was confident that Dick's attack upon the black youth would bring down the wrath of all the others upon them.

"Good old Dick!" whispered Doc.

"I suppose we're in for it now," said Dick, gloomily; "but I had to do it! He'd have killed you."

"We couldn't be in for anything worse than we were getting before,"

Doc reminded him. "Look at 'em now! I think it did 'em good."

For an instant the blacks were so surprised that they forgot to throw anything at the boys; then they commenced to laugh and jeer at the discomfitted youth sitting on the ground nursing a bloody

nose and while they were occupied by this new diversion, Zopinga herded the boys into the village and hurried them into the presence of a very fat negro who sat in conversation with several other warriors beneath the shade of a large tree.

"This guy must be the chief," said Doc.

"I wish we could talk to him," said Dick. "Maybe he'd send us back to the railroad, if we could explain that that was where we want to go."

"I'll try," said Doc. "P'r'aps he may understand English. Say, Big Boy!" he cried, addressing the fat negro. "Do you savvy English?" The black looked up at Doc and addressed him in one of the innumerable Bantu dialects, but the American boy only shook his head. "Nothing doing along that line, Uncle Tom," said Doc, with a sigh, and then, brightening: "Hey, Parley voo zong glaze?"

Notwithstanding the bumps and bruises that he was nursing Dick was unable to restrain his laughter. "What's the matter?" demanded Doc. "What's so funny?"

"Your French."

Doc grinned. "I must be improving," he said. "No one ever recognized my French as French before."

"Your friend there doesn't recognize it even as speech. Why don't you try making signs?"

"I never thought of that. Good old Dick! Every once in a while he shows a gleam of intelligence. Here goes! Watch me, Rain Cloud." He waved his hand at the negro to attract attention; then he pointed off in the general direction that he thought the railroad lay, after which he said: "Choo! Choo!" several times. Then he pointed first at Dick and then at himself; walked around in a small circle looking bewilderedly from one direction to another.

Stopping in front of the black he pointed at him, then at Dick, then at himself and finally out through the forest toward an imaginary railway and again said: "Choo! Choo! Choo! Choo!"

The negro considered him a moment through red-rimmed, bleary eyes; then he turned toward his fellows, jerked a grimy thumb in the direction of Doc, tapped his forehead significantly with a forefinger and issued a few curt instructions to Zopinga, who stepped forward and pushed the boys roughly along the village

street toward its far end.

"I guess he understood your sign language all right," said Dick.

"What makes you think so?" demanded Doc.

"Why, he thinks you're crazy—and he's not far off."

"Is that so?"

Zopinga halted before a grass hut shaped like a bee-hive, with a single opening about two and a half or three feet high, upon either side of which squatted a warrior aimed as was their captor. Zopinga motioned for the boys to enter and as they dropped upon their hands and knees to crawl into the dark interior, he accelerated their speed with the sole of a calloused foot and sent them, one by one, into darkness that was only a bit less thick than the foul stench which pervaded the noisome den.

Chapter 5

Crouching close together, Dick and Doc sat in silence upon the filthy floor of the hut. They could hear Zopinga talking to the guards at the entrance, and after he had gone away, they could still hear the guards conversing. It was most aggravating to be unable to understand a word of what was said; nor to gain a single clew to the nature of the people into whose power an unkind Fate had delivered them; nor any hint of the intentions of their captors toward them, for they were both now convinced that they were indeed captives. Presently Doc put his lips close to Dick's ear. "Do you hear anything?" he whispered.

Dick nodded. "It sounds like something breathing over there," he said.

"It is," Doc's voice trembled just a little. "I can see something over against that wall."

Their eyes were becoming accustomed to the gloom of the interior and slowly things were taking form within. Dick strained his eyes in the direction of the sound. "I see it—there are two of them. Do you suppose they're men, or—"

"Or what?" asked Doc.

"Lions, or something," suggested Dick, weakly.

Doc felt in his pants' pocket and brought out a knife, but his fingers were trembling so that he had difficulty in opening the blade. "It's getting up!" he whispered.

They sat with their eyes rivetted upon the dark bulk that moved against the back wall of the hut. It seemed very large and entirely ominous, though as yet it had taken on no definite form that they might recognize.

"It—it's comin' toward us," chattered Doc. "I wish it was a lion! I wouldn't be as scairt if I knew it was a lion as I am not knowing what it is."

"Gosh, it might be anything!"

"Here comes the other one," announced Dick. "Say, I believe they're men. I'm getting so I can see better in this old hole. Yes, they are men."

"Then they must be prisoners, too," said Doc.

"Just the same you better get your knife out, too," said Dick. "I've had mine out—I was just going to tell you to get yours out." They sat very still as the two forms crept toward them on all fours and presently they saw that one was a very large negro and the other either a very small one, or a child. "Tell 'em to keep away, or we'll stick 'em with our knives," said Doc. "They wouldn't understand if we did tell 'em," replied Dick, and then, in pidgin English that they could barely understand, one of the blacks announced that he spoke excellent English.

"Gee!" exclaimed Doc, with a sigh of relief, "I could almost kiss him."

The boys asked questions that the black understood only with the greatest difficulty and equally arduous were their efforts to translate his replies; but, at least, they had found a medium of communication, however weak and uncertain, and they were slowly coming to a realization of the predicament in which their foolhardy venture into the jungle had placed them.

"What they going to do with us in here?" asked Dick.

"Make us fat," explained the black.

"Make us fat? What for?" demanded Doc. "Gee, I'm too fat already."

"Make us fat to eat," explained the negro.

"Golly!" cried Dick. "They're cannibals! Is that what he means?"

"Yes. Bad men. Cannibals." The black shook his head.

The boys were silent for a long time. Their thoughts were far away—far across continents and oceans to distant homes, to mothers—to all the loving and beloved friends they were never to see again.

"And to think that no one will ever know what became of us," said Dick, solemnly. "Golly! it's awful, Doc."

"It hasn't happened yet, Dick," replied his cousin; "and it's up to us to see that it doesn't happen. There must be some way to escape. Anyway we mustn't give up—not until they begin to ask which is preferred, dark meat, or light."

Dick grinned. "You bet we won't give up, Doc, old boy. We'll learn all we can from this fellow so that when the time comes we'll have a better chance of making our getaway. The first thing to do is to try to learn the language. If we only knew what they were talking about, that might help us. And anyway, if we do escape, we'll be better off if we know how to inquire our way."

"Yes, we might meet a traffic cop."

"Don't be an idiot."

Dick turned to the black squatting beside them. "What's your name?" he asked.

"Bulala," replied the black, and then he explained that he had been a cook, or safari, for a white man who was hunting big game; but that something had gone wrong and he had run away to go back to his home, and had been captured by these people whom he described as the Bagalla tribe.

"Do you speak the same language as these Bagalla?" demanded Doc.

"We understand each other," replied Bulala.

"Will you teach us your language?"

Bulala was greatly pleased with the idea, and set out at once upon the role of tutor and never in the world had a tutor such eager pupils, and never had Dick and Doc applied themselves so diligently to the acquisition of useful knowledge.

"Say," said Doc, "this language is a cinch."

"If you learn it as well as you did French," said Dick, "you ought to be able to understand yourself in about a hundred years, even if nobody else can understand you."

"Is that so?" demanded Doc. "Well, you're not so good, yourself."

As the boys' eyes had become more and more accustomed to the dim light of the interior of the hut they had discovered the scant furnishings, the filth, and their fellow prisoners. Bulala was evidently a densely ignorant, but happy-natured, West Coast black, while the other, whom Bulala referred to as Ukundo, was a pygmy and, though a full grown man, came barely to the shoulders of the twins.

When Ukundo discovered that Bulala was attempting to teach the boys his language, he developed a great interest in the experiment and as he was much brighter than Bulala, it was more often his own dialect that the boys learned than that of the tribe to which Bulala had belonged.

As for the furnishings of the hut, they consisted of several filthy sleeping mats that must have been discarded by their original owners as absolutely impossible for human use, and when anything becomes too filthy for a native African, its condition must be beyond words.

Ukundo generously dragged two of them into place for the boys, but when they examined them, they both drew away. "If it weren't for the guards outside, I'd lead mine out and tie it to a tree," said Doc.

"Afraid it would run away?" asked Dick.

"No; I'd be afraid it would crawl back in here with us."

At dusk some food was brought them—hideously repulsive, malodorous stuff that neither of the boys could touch to their lips, half starved though they were. But Bulala and Ukundo were not so particular, and gobbled down their own portions and the boys' as well to the accompaniment of sounds that reminded Doc of feeding time at the hog house on his grandfather's farm.

With the coming of night there came also the night noises of the village and the jungle. Through the aperture in the base of the hut, that served both as door and window, the boys saw fires twinkling in the village; snatches of conversation came to them and the sound of laughter. They saw figures moving about the fires, and caught glimpses of savage dancers, and heard the sound of tom-toms; but the heat from the blazing fires did not enter the cold, damp hut, nor did the laughter warm their hearts.

They crept close together for warmth and at last, fell asleep, hungry, cold and exhausted.

Chapter 6

When they awoke, it was still dark and much colder. The village fires had died away, or had been banked for the night. All was silence. Yet the boys were conscious that they had been awakened by a noise, as though the echo still lingered in their ears. Presently they were sure of it—a thunderous sound that rolled in mighty volume out of the dark jungle and made the earth tremble.

"Are you awake?" whispered Doc.

"Yes."

"Did you hear that?"

"It's a lion."

"Do you suppose he's in the village?"

"He sounds awful close."

Numa was not in the village; he roared with his nose close to the palisade, voicing his anger at the stout barrier that kept him from the tender flesh within.

"Golly," said Dick; "it wouldn't do us much good if we did escape. It would be like jumping from the frying pan into the fire."

"Do you mean you'd rather stay here and be eaten by cannibals than try to escape?" demanded Doc.

"No, I don't mean anything of the kind—I just think we haven't much chance of getting out of this mess, one way or the other—but I sure would rather try to get out of it than just sit still and wait to

be eaten, like Bulala and Ukundo are doing. Have you any scheme, Doc, for getting away?"

"Not yet. From what I could understand of Bulala's gibberish I guess they won't eat us for a while. He seems to think that they will wait until we are fattened up a bit; but from something else he said, it is just possible that they are saving us for a big feast that they have invited a lot of other villages to attend. Anyway, if we can have a few days to get a line on the habits and customs of the village, we will be in a better position to pick out the best plan and the best time for making our getaway. Gee, but it's cold!"

"I didn't know anyone could be so cold and hungry, and live," said Dick.

"Neither did I. It's no use trying to get to sleep again. I'm going to get up and move around. Maybe that will make us warm."

But all it did was to awaken Bulala and Ukundo, who were not angry at all at being awakened and only laughed when the boys told them how cold they were. Bulala assured them that one was always cold at night and as he and Ukundo were practically naked the twins felt a bit ashamed of their grumbling.

Daylight came at last and with the rising sun came warmth and renewed vitality. The boys felt almost cheerful and now they were so hungry that they knew they would eat whatever their captors set before them, however vile it might appear. But nothing was brought them. In fact it was almost noon before any attention was paid them and then a warrior came and ordered all four of them out of the hut. With their guards they were herded toward the chief's hut in the center of the village.

Here they found many warriors lined up before the blear-eyed old cannibal. The chief looked them all over; then addressed the twins.

"He wants to know what you were doing in his country," interpreted Bulala.

"Tell him we were passing through on the train and that we wandered into the jungle and got lost," said Dick. "Tell him we want to go back to the railway and that if he will take us, our fathers will pay him a big reward."

Bulala explained all this to the chief and there followed a lengthy discussion between the chief and his warriors, at the end of which Bulala again interpreted.

"Chief Galla Galla says he will take you back after a while. He wants you to stay here a few days. Then he will take you back. Also he wants all your clothes. He says you must take them off and give them to him as presents, if you want him to take you back to your people."

"But we'll freeze," expostulated Doc.

"You had better give them to him, for he will take them anyway," advised Bulala.

Doc turned and looked at Dick. "What are we going to do about it?" he asked.

"Tell him we'll freeze at night without our clothes, Bulala," cried Dick.

Bulala and Galla Galla held a lengthy discourse at the end of which the former announced that the chief insisted upon having their clothes, but would furnish them with other apparel to take its place.

"Well, tell him to trot it out," snapped Doc.

Again there was much haggling, but finally the chief sent one of his warriors to bring a handful of filthy calico rags, which he threw at the feet of the two boys. Doc started to argue the question, but Bulala's council, combined with the menacing attitude of Galla Galla, convinced the twins that they could do nothing but comply with the commands of their captor.

"I'm going to take the things out of my pockets," said Doc

"They'll probably swipe everything we've got, but if possible we ought to try to save our knives," suggested Dick.

And sure enough, the first thing that came out of Dick's pocket, which happened to be a fountain pen, Galla Galla held out his hand to receive.

"A lot of good it'll do the old robber," growled Dick.

"He wants to know what it is," said Bulala.

"Tell him it's a bottle with something good to drink in it," snapped Doc. "Here, I'll show him how to get it out—looky, old tar-baby," and Doc stepped forward and removed the cap from the pen point. "Tell him," he explained to Bulala, "to put the shiny end in his mouth and then pull this little lever here—that'll squirt the nice drink into his tummy."

Galla Galla did as Bulala directed. A peculiar expression overspread his evil face and then he commenced to spit, to the great astonishment not only of himself but of the assembled warriors, for Galla Galla was undeniably spitting blue. The effect upon him was astonishing and rather terrifying. He leaped about like a mad man, emitting strange noises which were interspersed with remarks that the boys were positive were not at all nice; but the remarkable part of the performance was that he vented all his rage upon Bulala, striking and kicking the poor fellow unmercifully.

"Tell him it won't hurt him," yelled Dick, fearful now of the results of Doc's joke. "Tell him white men drink it to make them strong," and when Bulala had succeeded in transmitting this information to Galla Galla the chief immediately calmed down but for a long time thereafter, he continued to spit blue.

The boys had now emptied their pockets, but each clung to his knife, attempting to hide it from the eyes of the greedy Galla Galla. The attempt was vain; a filthy, pinkish palm was extended toward Doc who needed no one to interpret the cannibal's demands into gimme, gimme, gimme! It was then that an idea came to Doc that was little short of inspiration. His eyes snapped and sparkled.

"Why not?" he demanded aloud.

"Why not what?" asked Dick.

"Watch me!" cried Doc.

Galla Galla was becoming insistent—he was demanding in peremptory tones that Doc deliver the knife forthwith. But Doc did nothing of the kind. Instead, he held up his left palm outstretched for silence, then he opened his right hand, exposing to the view of all the coveted knife.

"Tell them," he said to Bulala, "to watch me closely and I will show them a trick they never saw before."

"Big medicine?" asked Bulala.

Doc seized upon the words. "Big medicine!" he cried. "That's the idea, Bulala! Tell 'em I'm going to make some big medicine with a capital B."

Even Galla Galla seemed impressed as the white boy covered the knife with his left palm. Doc clasped his hands and blew upon them. Then he raised them above his head. "Abacadabra!" he

shouted. "Allo, presto, change cars and begone! Now you see it, now you don't." He opened his hands and held them palms up. The knife had vanished! The chief was greatly puzzled. He looked all about for the knife and when he came close to Doc the latter reached suddenly toward him and apparently extracted the missing article from Galla Galla's left ear. This was evidently too much for the savage old cannibal. He leaped backward so quickly that he stumbled and fell sprawling over the stool upon which he had been sitting. The blow to his dignity had a bad effect upon his temper,—none too good at best. He came to his feet fairly bubbling with rage and angrily demanded that the boys remove their clothing and don the rags that had been brought them.

"Hang on to your knife as long as you can," admonished Doc. "I think I can save 'em both when I get my new minus-fours wrapped around me. How do you put this stuff on, anyway?"

"Ask Bulala," advised Dick. And that worthy showed the boys how to wrap the cloth about their hips and carry the end between their legs so that a little apron fell down in front and another behind.

All this time the two boys had managed to conceal their knives, but, at last, Galla Calla again demanded them. Doc was desperate. "We mustn't give them up, Dick," he said, "they're the only useful things we have. By Jimminy crickets! I won't give 'em up!" He turned to Bulala. "Tell that fat boy that if anyone takes this medicine away from us, it will kill him; but that if he doesn't want us to keep them, we will send them away. Watch!" He exposed his own knife and repeated the mystic signs and words that he had used before—and the knife was gone. Then he took Dick's knife and did the same things. Galla Galla shook his head.

"He wants to know where they are," said Bulala.

Doc looked about in an effort to gain time, while he conjured some reply that would put an end to Galla Galla's search for the knives. His eyes fell upon the same youth who had attempted to brain him the previous day, while Zopinga had been escorting them into the village. Doc never could account for the idea that popped into his head as he beheld again the hideous features of the young imp who had come so near killing him, but he always admitted that it was a good idea—for him and Dick, if not for the black youth. He stepped suddenly close to the youth and pointed into his ear.

"Tell Galla Galla," he said to Bulala, "that our big medicine has hidden itself inside this fellow's head and that it won't come out until we are with our own people."

Chapter 7

The hot days and the cold nights dragged on. The food, poor and distasteful as it was, the boys learned to eat; they could not understand why it did not kill them, for they were sure that it contained all the germs that had ever been discovered with several millions that had not. The hideous nights, made unbearable by cold and vermin, seemed eternities of suffering. Yet the boys lived on—lived and learned. They learned the language of Ukundo; learned to speak in a dialect that all could understand; learned to understand that of their captors, the Bagalla.

Many other things they came to understand during the days of their captivity, not the least of which was a new conception of the Negro. To Doc, whose experience with colored people had been limited to a few worthless specimens of the Northern States, it came as a revelation. Even among the warriors of the cannibal Bagalla, he encountered individuals who possessed great natural dignity, poise and evident strength of character.

Bulala, a West Coast black, densely ignorant and superstitious, had, nevertheless, a heart of gold, that revealed itself in his loyalty and generosity; while little Ukundo, the pygmy, perhaps among the lowest in the social scale of all African peoples, proved a staunch friend and a good comrade. To his natural shrewdness was added an almost uncanny knowledge of the jungle and the jungle people, both beast and human; the tales he told the boys shortened many a weary hour.

After the first week of their captivity, the boys had managed to get a message to chief Galla Galla through Bulala and Zopinga, explaining to him that being unaccustomed to breathing the close air of a hut and living always without sunshine, they would surely die. They asked to be given more freedom and exercise, pointing out that there was little likelihood of their being able to escape, since they were unfamiliar with the jungle and would not know in what direction to go should they be able to leave the village. But upon one point they were very careful not to commit themselves—they did not promise not to try to escape.

And as a result of their plea, Galla Galla gave all the prisoners the freedom of the village during the day time, placing the guards at the village gates instead of at the doorway of the hut in which they had been confined. And at night there were no guards at all, since the village gates were then closed and locked and the dangers of the jungle were sufficient to keep any one from attempting to escape. The boys had really had little hope that their request would be granted, and there is little likelihood that it would have been, but for the shrewdness of Ukundo, who had accurately gauged the impression Doc's wizardry had made upon Galla Galla, measuring it, doubtless, by the awe that it had created in his own superstitious mind. It was due to Ukundo, therefore, that Bulala did not transmit the message in the form of a request. Instead, Zopinga had carried a demand to his chief, backed by a threat that the white boy witch-doctor would loose some very much more terrible medicine upon him, if he refused to permit them the freedom of the village; and Ukundo had been careful to insure that the demand included both Bulala and himself.

Influenced by their fear of Doc's magic, the villagers treated the boys with more respect than they would ordinarily have been accorded and there was one youth in particular who gave them a very wide berth, keeping as far from them as possible. This was Paabu, the youth within whose thick skull it was popularly believed reposed the big medicine of the white boy witch-doctor.

Since the moment that Doc had made the two knives disappear within Paabu's left ear that unhappy individual had been the object of much suspicious observation upon the part of all the villagers. At first he had enjoyed this unusual celebrity and had strutted about with great pompousness, but when it had been whispered that Galla

Galla was becoming consumed with curiosity to learn if the big medicine was indeed inside Paabu's head, the youth had filled with a great terror that kept him almost continuously in the seclusion and dirt of his father's hut; for he knew of but one way in which Galla Galla could definitely learn if the big medicine was actually within his skull, and Paabu knew Galla Galla well enough to know that, whenever the spirit chanced to move him, he would not hesitate to make a thorough investigation, no matter how painful, or how fatal to Paabu.

One day, as the boys were lying in the shade beside their hut, Galla Galla approached them. With him was an evil-faced individual whom the boys recognized as Intamo, the witch-doctor of the Bagalla, a Mugalla of great power whose influence over Galla Galla made him in many ways virtually chief of the Bagalla. His wrinkled face was seamed and lined by age and vicious thoughts, and clouded by a perpetual scowl—a fit setting for his blood-shot eyes and his sharp, filed, cannibal teeth. As the two approached the boys, Intamo excitedly urged something upon the chief, but he ceased speaking as they came within earshot of Dick and Doc, as though fearful that they might overhear and understand.

However, Galla Galla, stopping in front of his two young captives, let the cat out of the bag. "Intamo say your medicine no good," he announced.

"Let him make better medicine," retorted Doc in halting and faulty Bagalla.

"Intamo say your medicine not in Paabu's head," continued Galla Galla.

"I say it is. Didn't you see me put it there?"

"We find out," announced the chief. "How you find out?" demanded Dick, and then, as a sudden thought popped into his mind: "Golly! You don't mean—"

"How you find out what's in a nut?" retorted Galla Galla. "You crack it!"

"But you'd kill him," cried Doc, horror stricken.

"And if we do not find the big medicine there, we kill you," said Intamo, who would have liked nothing better than to get rid of the white boy whose big medicine had had a bad effect upon Intamo's reputation as a witch-doctor, since he had been unable to duplicate

Doc's exhibition of wizardry.

"You come now," he continued. "We find out!"

And accompanied by Galla Galla and the boys, Intamo led the way toward the center of the village where, in an open space before the chief's hut, all the ceremonies of the tribe were conducted.

While Paabu was being searched out and dragged, resisting and screaming, to be sacrificed upon the altar of ignorance and superstition, word ran rapidly through the village that a bit of delicious entertainment was about to be staged, and there resulted a rush for grand stand seats. A ring of savage warriors kept a circular place cleared; in the center of this clearing stood Galla Galla and Intamo. To them Paabu was dragged.

Dick and Doc stood shoulder to shoulder in the front rank of spectators, their tanned faces blanched with horror. Two warriors held the half fainting Paabu while Intamo, armed with a knobkerrie, made mystical passes in the air and mumbled a weird incantation that was supposed to weaken the strength of the white boy's big medicine, in the event that it should actually be found within the unfortunate Paabu's head.

"Golly!" whispered Dick, "can't we do something to stop them before Intamo breaks that boy's head open with his club?"

"Makes me feel like a murderer," groaned Doc.

"You will be a murderer—almost—if they go through with this thing," said Dick. "But if you tell 'em the truth, they'll kill us."

"When they don't find the knives inside his coco, they'll kill us anyway," replied Doc.

"Then you better tell 'em," advised Dick. "There's no use lettin' 'em kill that poor kid."

"I've got it!" cried Doc. "For the love of Mike! Quick! Slip me your knife! Don't let anyone see it. Here! That's it! Now watch my smoke?"

Slipping Dick's knife inside his loin cloth beside his own, Doc stepped forward into the circle. "Wait!" he commanded, advancing toward Intamo, but addressing Galla Galla. "You need not kill Paabu. I can prove that the big medicine that belongs to my friend and the big medicine that belongs to me are both inside Paabu's head. I am great witch-doctor and do not have to crack Paabu's

skull open to get the medicine out, the way Intamo does. See!"

And before Intamo could prevent, Doc stepped close to the unfortunate victim of Intamo's jealousy and Galla Galla's curiosity, and with two swift movements of his right hand appeared to withdraw the knives from Paabu's ear. Turning, he exhibited them upon the palm of his open hand to Galla Galla and the assembled Bagalla.

Perhaps Doc's Bagalla had been lame and halting, but there was no one there who did not perfectly understand the wondrous powers of his great magic, nor fail to see that his medicine was much stronger than that of Intamo, for it is very true that we are all convinced by what we think we see, quite as surely as by what we actually do see.

Galla Galla was nonplussed. Intamo was furious. Being an unscrupulous old fakir, himself, he was convinced that Doc had done no more than play a clever trick upon them all—a trick by which he, for one, did not intend to be fooled. But now he knew that Doc had beaten him at his own game and perhaps in the bottom of his ignorant, savage brain there was enough natural superstition to half convince him that perhaps, after all, here was a real, genuine witch-doctor who commanded demons and controlled their supernatural powers. His fear and hatred of Doc were increased a hundred fold by the happenings of the past few minutes and within his evil heart there crystalized the determination to rid himself as quickly as possible of this dangerous competitor.

Had he known what was coming, he would have used his knobkerrie to that end upon the instant, for Doc had been smitten by another of those brilliant ideas that had made him famous and feared at school as a practical joker—though it is only fair to record that his jokes had always been harmless and good-natured ones until he had met Intamo. He wheeled suddenly toward that portion of the ring where the greatest throng was gathering, and held the two knives out upon his open palm.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" he cried. "We have here two ordinary pocket knives." The fact that he spoke English and that none of his auditors understood him, but added to the impressiveness of his words, since all the tribe was quite convinced that he was about to make big medicine.

"Step right up and examine them! Feel them! Bite them!"

Some of his hearers began to show evidences of growing nervousness.

"You see that they are gen-u-ine. You will note that I have no accomplices. Now, ladies and gentlemen, watch me closely!"

As upon the other occasions, he placed his left palm over the knives, clasped his hands, blew upon them, raised them above his head.

"Abacadabra!" he screamed with such sudden shrillness that his audience fell back in terror. "Allo, presto, change cars and be gone!" He turned slowly about until he had located the exact position of Intamo and then before the unsuspecting witch-doctor could guess his purpose Doc sprang quickly to his side and placed both palms over the old villain's ear. "Now you see 'em! Now you don't!" he concluded, and turned with outspread, empty palms toward Galla Galla.

He stood thus in impressive silence for several seconds, while the true meaning of what he had done sank into the muddy brains of his audience.

Then he addressed Galla Galla.

"You saw me take the big medicine from the head of Paabu and place it on the head of Intamo," he said in the language of the chief. "If you want to make sure that it is in Intamo's head, it may be that he will loan you his war club."

Chapter 8

Later that same afternoon, while Dick and Doc were chatting beside their hut with Bulala and Ukundo, they heard a great racket at the village gates. Thither from all directions were running men, women and children and presently the prisoners saw a great company of strange natives surging into the compound. They were greeted with laughter and shouting that proclaimed them to be friends of the villagers.

"The guests are coming to the feast," said Ukundo, grimly, and thereafter the four sat in moody silence, each wrapped in his own thoughts. The actuality of their fate had never seemed more than a bad dream to the boys, but now, at last, it was borne in to them as something very real, and very terrible, and very close. They could see the hideous, painted faces of the newcomers and the grinning mouths that exposed the yellow teeth, filed to sharp points. They saw some of the villagers point them out and scores of greedy eyes directed upon them.

"I remember," said Dick, "how I used to stand outside the confectioner's shop looking at the goodies in the window. Those bounders reminded me of it."

"I suppose we look like the original candy kids," sighed Doc.

Presently four or five warriors came and seized Bulala. They dragged him to a small hut near the chief's and there they bound him hand and foot and threw him inside.

"Poor Bulala," whispered Doc.

"He was a good friend," said Dick. "Oh, isn't there anything we can do?"

Doc shook his head and looked inquiringly at Ukundo, but Ukundo only sat staring at the ground.

"Ukundo!" snapped Dick. The pygmy looked up.

"What?" he asked.

"Can't we escape, Ukundo?"

"He make big medicine," said Ukundo, jerking a thumb at Doc. "If he can not eseape, how can poor Ukundo, who cannot make any medicine?"

"My medicine is white man's medicine," said Doc. "It cannot show me my way through the jungle. If I got out of the village, I should be lost and the lions would get me."

"If you can get out of the village and take Ukundo with you, he will take you through the jungle to his own people. Ukundo knows the jungle, but he is afraid at night. At night the jungle is full of demons. If you can get out in the day-time, Ukundo will go with you and show you the way. But you can not get out while it is light, for the Bagalla will see you. At night we should be killed and eaten by the demons. It cannot be done." Thus spoke Ukundo, the pygmy, who knew the jungle better than any man.

It was several minutes before Doc replied, for he was thinking very hard, indeed. Presently he looked quickly up at Ukundo.

"Ukundo," he cried, "if it is only the demons you fear, there is nothing to prevent our trying to escape at night, for I can make medicine that will protect us from them."

Ukundo shook his head. "I do not know," he said, doubtingly.

"You have seen me make stronger medicine than Intamo can make," urged Doc. "Do you not believe me, when I say that I can make medicine that will keep every demon of the jungle from harming us?"

"Are you sure?" demanded Ukundo.

"Didn't we spend a night in the jungle before we reached this village?" asked Dick. "Not one single little bit of a demon bothered us. You ought to have seen 'em run, the minute they laid their eyes

on Doc."

Ukundo's eyes grew very wide as he looked with awe at Doc. "The medicine of the white boy witch-doctor must be very strong," he said.

"It is," admitted Doc. "I'll give you my word that not a demon will hurt you while I am along; but if we stay here, Galla Galla will eat you. Will you come with us?"

Ukundo glanced at the hut in which lay the unhappy Bulala. "Yes," he said, "Ukundo will go with you."

"Good old Ukundo!" cried Dick, and then, in a whisper, "We'll have to go tonight because tomorrow it may be too late for poor Bulala."

"Bulala?" questioned Ukundo. "Bulala is already as good as dead."

"You think they will kill him tonight?" demanded Dick. Ukundo shrugged his shoulders, "Perhaps."

"But we must save him if we can," insisted Dick.

"We cannot," said Ukundo.

"We can try," said Doc.

"Yes, we can try," agreed Ukundo, without enthusiasm, for Ukundo was a fatalist, believing, as many primitive people do, that whatever is about to happen must happen and that it is useless to struggle against it. Perhaps that is why neither he nor Bulala had given any serious thought to the matter of escape, being content to assume that if Fate had ordained that they were to be eaten by the Bagalla, they would be eaten by the Bagalla, and that was all that there was to it.

But Dick and Doc were not fatalists. They knew that their own wit and ability and courage had a great deal more to do with guiding their destinies than did any legendary lady called Fate. To them Fate was just a silly bogy, like the demons of Ukundo, and so they planned and schemed against the time when conditions might be right for them to attempt to make a break for liberty. Their difficulties were greatly increased because of Bulala, but not once did either of them think of abandoning this good friend without making an attempt to rescue him, even though failure to do so might almost certainly result in preventing their own escape.

As night fell, the boys could see the villagers and their guests

assembling for the evening meal. Pots were being brought forth and filled with water that was set to boil over numerous fires. There was a great deal of loud talk and laughter. The captives wondered if the pots of boiling water were waiting to receive Bulala and how soon it would be before their turn would come, and as they sat there, watching the fierce and terrible savages, their minds could not but be filled with gloomy thoughts and dire forebodings, try though they would to cast them out. For some time they had sat in silence, when their attention was attracted by a rustling sound as of a body crushing against the side of their grass-walled hut. They were sitting just outside the entrance; someone, or some thing, was approaching from behind the hut, keeping close to the outside wall, which was in dense shadow. Dick and Doc drew their knives and waited. Who or what could it be? Whoever, or whatever it was it was quite evident that it did not wish anyone to know that it was there; the stealthiness of its approach made that quite plain.

Slowly Dick rose to his feet, his knife ready in his hand, and Doc placed himself at Dick's side. Ukundo, unarmed, stood at Dick's left. Thus the three waited in tense silence while the stealthy sounds approached along the side of the hut, through the inky darkness of the shadows cast by the glaring camp fires of the village.

"Demon!" whispered Ukundo.

"Leave him to me then," said Doc. "But if it's a lion you can have it."

"Not a lion," said Ukundo. "Demon—or man!"

Presently a low "S-s-t!" sounded from the shadows.

"Who are you?" demanded Dick.

"What do you want?" asked Doc.

"I am Paabu," whispered a voice, very low. "I come to warn you."

"Come closer," said Doc. "We are alone."

A part of the shadow resolved itself into the youth, as he came nearer and crouched low against the side of the hut.

"You saved my life today," he said, addressing Doc, "so I come to warn you. Intamo has put poison in food for you. I saw him. Paabu hates Intamo. That is all! I go!"

"Wait!" urged Doc. "What are they going to do with Bulala?"

Paabu grinned. "Eat him, of course," he said.

"When?"

"Tomorrow night. Next night they eat Ukundo. I think they are afraid of your medicine. They may not eat you, unless Intamo is able to kill you with poison."

"They couldn't eat us then," said Dick, "because the poison would kill them."

"No!" contradicted Paabu. "Intamo take care of that. Intamo make good poison, and as soon as you die, he cut out all your insides. There will be no poison in your flesh. If he thinks you eat the poison food, and then you do not die, he will be afraid. But he will find another way to kill you unless your medicine is very strong. That is why Paabu come to warn you—so that you may make strong medicine."

He started away.

"Wait!" said Dick again. "Have they killed Bulala yet?"

"No!"

"When will they kill him?"

"Tomorrow."

"Will you do something for me?" asked Doc.

"What?" demanded Paabu.

"Bring us somec weapons—four knives, four spears, four bows and some arrows. Will you do that for me, Paabu?"

"I am afraid. Galla Calla would kill me. Intamo would kill me, if he knew I come here and speak with you."

"They will never know," insisted Doc.

"I am afraid," said Paabu. "Now I go."

"Look!" whispered Doc. He drew his pocket knife from his loin cloth.

"See this?" and he held the big medicine close to Paabu's face.

The youth drew back in terror. "Do not put it in my head!" he whimpered.

"I will not put it in your head, Paabu," Doc assured him, "because I am your friend, but I will give it to you, if you will bring us the weapons. How would you like to own this big medicine that is stronger than any medicine that Intamo can make? You could be a

great witch-doctor if you owned this, Paabu. What do you say?"

"It will not hurt me?" asked Paabu, fearfully.

"It will not hurt you, if I tell it not to," replied Doc. "If I give it to you, then it will be yours and so cannot hurt you unless you make it."

"Very well," said Paabu. "I will bring you the weapons."

"When?" demanded Doc.

"Very soon."

"Good! If you are not back very soon the big medicine will be angry and then I don't know what it might do to you. Hurry!"

Paabu vanished among the shadows and the three sat down to wait and plan. At least they had taken the first step, but they were still inside the village, surrounded by cruel and savage captors.

While they waited, a man came, bringing them food. He was not one who had brought them food before and they guessed that he had been sent by Intamo. As soon as he had gone, they dug a hole in the ground and buried all the food, then they relapsed into silent, anxious waiting.

Chapter 9

Far away, at the edge of the jungle, fifty ebon warriors were camped in a grassy clearing. They were fine, stalwart men with regular features and strong, white teeth. One of them was strumming upon a crude stringed instrument, while two of his fellows were dancing in the firelight that gleamed back from the glossy velvet of their skin. Their weapons, laid aside, were within easy reach and many of them still wore the plumed headdress of their tribe. Their stern faces were lighted by smiles, for this was their hour of relaxation, following a hard day of fruitless search.

A giant white man, swinging through the trees, approached the camp of the fifty warriors. He was naked but for a leopard skin, and armed only with a long rope and a hunting knife. Through the darkness of the jungle, he moved with perfect sureness and in utter silence. Numa, the hunting lion, down wind from him, caught his scent and growled. It was a scent that Numa knew well, and feared. It was not alone the scent of man—it was the scent of The Man.

Presently he dropped lightly to the ground beside the camp. Instantly the warriors were upon their feet, their weapons ready in their hands.

"It is I, my children," said the man. "It is I, Tarzan of the Apes!"

The warriors tossed aside their weapons. "Welcome Big Bwana!" "Welcome, Tarzan!" they called.

"What luck, Muviro?" demanded the ape man.

"None, master," replied a mighty black. "We have searched in all directions, but we have seen no spoor of the white boys."

"Nor I," said Tarzan. "I am half convinced that the Mugalla whom we questioned a week ago lied to us, when he said that they had come to his village and that Galla Galla, their chief, had sent them on toward my country with some friendly Karendo traders. Tomorrow we shall set out for the village of Galla Galla."

Chapter 10

The twins and Ukundo had not long to wait before Paabu returned, as he had promised, bringing weapons to them. His terror was quite real when he received Doc's pocket knife in payment of his services, but his ambition to become a great witch-doctor overcame his fears and it was a proud, though frightened Paabu, who sneaked away in the darkness, clutching the big medicine tightly in one grimy paw.

About the village fires the boys could see the natives eating and drinking, while Intamo, clothed in all the hideous and grotesque finery of his profession, danced weirdly in the firelight, sprinkling powder into the various cooking pots and making strange passes above them with a stick to which was fastened the brush from the tail of a buffalo. Ukundo told them that Intamo was making medicine to frighten the demons away from the pots in which Bulala would be cooked on the morrow and that the real festivities would not commence until the following night. There was little dancing in the village, that night, and after Intamo had completed his ceremony, the blacks commenced to retire to their huts and soon the village street was deserted. All the fires were banked with the exception of one. The village was quite dark.

The moment was approaching when the boys could make their long deferred attempt to escape. In low whispers they had been discussing their plans with Ukundo, all the evening. Now it was only a matter of waiting until they felt sure that the entire village

was asleep.

They had distributed the weapons brought them by Paabu, and the feel of them in their hands seemed to impart a new courage and almost to insure the success of their venture.

"Golly!" said Dick, presently. "Don't you suppose they're asleep yet?"

"Better wait a little longer," counselled Doc. "This is our only chance and we just can't fail."

At that moment they saw a figure emerge from one of the huts and come toward them.

"There!" said Doc. "What did I tell you?"

The figure approached at a brisk walk and the three hid their weapons as best they could, putting them on the ground and squatting in front of them, but keeping them within reach; for there was something sinister about this silent figure, advancing through the sleeping village. The sickly light of a single dying camp fire dimly outlined the approaching figure, which the waiting captives could see was that of a large warrior in whose right hand swung a short, heavy knobkerrie.

Who could it be? What was his mission in the dead of night?

He was almost upon them before he perceived them, huddled just outside the entrance of their hut; his surprise at seeing them there was evident, for he stopped suddenly with an angry grunt.

"Why are you not in your hut?" he demanded in a hoarse whisper.

"Which is the white boy witch-doctor? I would speak with him."

It was Intamo. The three recognized him simultaneously and knew why he had come and why he carried the knobkerrie.

"I am he," replied Doc. "What do you want of me?"

The only answer that Intamo made was to leap forward with raised bludgeon. With a cry of horror, Dick jumped to his feet and sprang between Intamo and his intended victim. With his short spear grasped in both hands and held horizontally before him and above his head he sought to break the force of Itamo's wicked blow. The knobkerrie crashed upon the stout wood of the spear haft and glanced to one side. But Intamo with the sweep of a mighty arm brushed the lad aside and swung his club again.

It was at this instant that a small, pantherlike figure, springing with the agility and ferocity of one of the great jungle eats, launched itself full upon the breast of Intamo, hurling the witch-doctor to the ground. Twice a muscular arm rose and fell; twice a dull blade gleamed for an instant in the fitful firelight, then Ukundo arose from the prostrate form, but Intamo lay very still where he had fallen.

"Good old Ukundo!" whispered Dick in a broken voice that choked with a sob, for he knew that Doc had been very near to death.

"Each of you has saved my life," said Doc, "and—O, gee!—I don't know what to say!"

"Don't say anything," advised Dick. "Anyway, we aren't out of this mess yet."

"Now we better go," said Ukundo. "Have you made strong medicine against the jungle demons?"

"Very strong," replied Doc. "You have seen that my medicine is stronger than Intamo's, for he came here to kill me and instead it was he who was killed."

"Yes," admitted Ukundo, "I saw!"

As they had previously planned, the three crept stealthily along the rear of the village huts, keeping dose to the palisade. Dick led, Ukundo followed, and then Doc. They had to move very silently lest they awaken some of the numerous village curs, whose yapping might easily arouse the entire village. And so they moved forward very slowly, often just a few yards at a time, when they would lie quietly for several minutes. It was slow, nerve-wracking work. The hut in which Bulala was confined seemed miles away, though in fact it was but a few hundred feet. At last, however, after what seemed an eternity, they reached it and while the boys waited behind the hut, Ukundo crept to the front and crawled inside.

Again there was a long, long wait. The interminable minutes dragged slowly by. Not a sound came to their ears from the interior of the hut for what seemed ages, and then, at last, they heard a faint rustling within. A few minutes later Ukundo and Bulala crept to their sides. Bulala was almost overcome by emotion, so certain had he been that nothing could save him from the horrible fate that awaited him on the morrow; but his words of gratitude were

silenced and a moment later the four were creeping toward the village gates.

Here they met their serious obstacle. The gates were secured by chains through which was fastened an old time padlock, such as slavers once used to secure the chains to the necks of their poor victims. For a moment it seemed that they were doomed to failure at the very outset of their attempted break for liberty, but as the boys were examining the fastenings, Doc almost gave vent to a cry of relief; he had discovered that, with true native shiftlessness, the Bagalla had fastened the end of one of the stout chains to a post of the palisade with a bit of grass rope and as a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, this proved a very weak chain indeed. A single stroke of Doc's knife severed the rope and the chain clattered to the ground—an occurrence that almost proved their undoing for the noise startled a nearby cur into a frenzy of barking that was quickly taken up by every other dog in the village until it seemed that a thousand dogs were yapping at the top of their lungs.

And then the gates stuck as the four put their combined weight against them in an effort to swing them open. Dick glanced over his shoulder and saw a warrior emerging from a hut. The fellow, voicing a loud cry of warning, came running toward them, and in an instant the village was swarming with fierce blacks, all running with brandished spears. In a frenzy of hopelessness the four prisoners hurled themselves upon the sagging barrier, and this time the gates gave way and the quartette plunged into the outer darkness.

To cover the distance across the clearing into the black shadows of the jungle required but a few seconds, for their feet were winged by terror of the hideous death clutching so close behind to drag them back into its awful embrace.

A few feet beyond the village gates the Bagalla halted; they had no medicine to safeguard them against the malign influences of the demons of the darkness and the jungle.

There they stood, shouting threats and insults at the four fugitives who stumbled along the crooked jungle trail. But words could neither harm them, nor bring them back, and presently Galla Galla led his people back into the village and closed the gates.

"Tomorrow," he said, "when the light first comes faintly through

the forest, we will go forth and bring them back, for they will not go far tonight where the lions hunt, and the panthers lie in wait above the trail."

Chapter 11

Ukundo, master of jungle craft, led the little party by ways that no other might have found. He did not always follow the well-beaten trails, but seemed to know by instinct where short cuts might be taken and where one, by crawling upon all fours, might find a way through what seemed all impenetrable mass of tangled vegetation. For half an hour they moved along in silence; then Ukundo stopped.

"Lion!" he whispered. "He is coming! Take to the trees!"

Dick and Doc could see nothing, could hear nothing. They had been following each other by the not always simple expedient of actually touching the one ahead. If they lost touch, they were as good as lost until they again made contact. Now they saw no trees. They knew there were trees all about them, but they could see none. The blackness was everywhere—darkness absolute. They stood up and groped about.

"Hurry!" warned Ukundo. "He comes!"

They heard a crashing in the underbrush. Doc's fingers came in contact with the bole of a great tree. "Here, Dick!" he whispered. "Here's a tree! This way!" He felt Dick touch him. The noise in the underbrush seemed very close.

"Climb!" said Dick. "I've found the tree. Hurry up!"

Doc attempted to scramble up the giant trunk, but he could not span it with his arms, nor could Dick. They reached through the

darkness searching for a branch, but found none. A horrid growl sounded almost in their ears. Dick realized that the beast was upon him and in the instant he obeyed the first impulse that seized him. He wheeled about facing the animal he could not see and, holding his spear in both hands, thrust it violently outward in the direction of that blood curdling growl. At the same instant he felt a heavy body strike the weapon. He was hurled to the ground and a great weight hurtled against him, a thunderous, deafening roar shook the earth, as the lion lunged into the thicket just beyond him, where there followed such a tumult as might have been made by a dozen lions fighting over their kill.

"Dick!" called Doc. "Are you all right?"

"Yes. Are you?"

"You bet! Hurry! I've found a way up this tree. Here! Over here!"

Dick groped his way to Doc, who had discovered a smaller tree growing near the huge one they had been unable to climb, and soon the two boys were perched high above the angry lion thrashing about in the underbrush and emitting terrific roars and growls. By shouting, they soon located Ukundo and Bulala in nearby trees; but they could not see them, and after a short discussion it was decided that they remain where they were until morning, when they could get an early start and hasten on towards the country of Ukundo, who promised that all of them would receive a warm and hospitable welcome.

Presently the lion ceased its noise and the boys tried to settle themselves with some degree of safety and comfort that they might snatch a brief sleep, for they knew that they had a day ahead of them that would tax to the utmost their weakened bodies unfitted by weeks of captivity and the vile food. Dick was concerned about his spear, which had been knocked from his grasp when the lion sprang against him.

And at last morning came, and with the first peep of dawn, Ukundo urged them to descend and continue their flight, assuring them that the Bagalla would be certain to trail them at least to the limits of Ugalla.

Dick and Doc scrambled down to search for Dick's spear. The first thing their eyes fell upon was the dead body of a great black-maned lion, from the chest of which protruded the missing weapon.

"Gee!" exclaimed Doc. "You killed him, Dick! You killed a lion!"

Ukundo and Bulala joined them and many were the congratulations heaped upon the astonished Dick. A hasty examination revealed what seemed the only explanation of the surprising event. In leaping for Dick, the lion must have misjudged the distance in the darkness and jumped too high. Dick's spear, thrust outward by chance, had been held at precisely the right angle and the lion had impaled itself upon the point, which had first entered its lungs, after which, the lion, in its mad efforts to dislodge the weapon had turned the point into its own heart.

"Golly!" exclaimed Dick, "I'd like to take it along, just the head, even."

"Cut off its tail," suggested Doc. "That's about all of it you'll feel like carrying after an hour or so."

And so Dick took the tail as the trophy of his first big game and the four resumed their flight, already tired and hungry before the day fully dawned.

Their progress was slow because the boys could not travel fast. Their bare feet were sore and bleeding and the naked flesh of their bodies was torn and scratched by the cruel thorns that seemed to reach out to seize them.

At noon they reached an open stretch of country where travelling was easier and their spirits were refreshed, for the dismal jungle had exercised a depressing effect upon them for many days—an effect which they had not actually realized until they had come out into the comparative open of the clearing.

"Gee!" exclaimed Doc. "It's just like the beginning of a long vacation."

"I know we're going to be all right now," said Dick, and at that very instant three-score painted Bagalla warriors leapt from ambush all about them.

The four looked about in consternation. They were completely surrounded. There was no escape.

"Shall we fight?" cried Doc.

"Yes!" replied Dick. "Bulala! Ukundo! will you fight with us? They will only kill us if they capture us."

"We had better die fighting," replied Ukundo.

Doc fitted an arrow to his bow and shot it at the oncoming warriors, but, sped by an unaccustomed hand, the arrow only described a graceful curve and stuck upright in the ground a few yards from Doc's feet. The Bagalla shouted in derision and rushed forward. Then Dick shot, but the string slipped from the notch in the end of the arrow and when he released the missile, it fell at his feet. But Ukundo was more adept. He drew the shaft far back, and when he let it fly, it embedded itself deeply in the breast of a shouting Bagalla. Then the Bagalla halted. They danced fiercely and shouted insults at the four.

"Why don't they shoot at us?" asked Dick.

"They want to take us alive," said Bulala.

"In a moment they will all charge from different directions," prophesied Ukundo. "We shall kill some, but they will take us alive."

Dick had thrown down his bow and stood ready with his spear. Doc followed his example. "I never did like an old bow and arrow, anyway," he said.

"Here they come!" warned Dick. "Good bye, Doc!"

"Good bye, Dick!" replied his cousin.

"Don't let 'em take you alive!"

"Poor Mother!"

"Golly! Here come a million more of the beggars!" exclaimed Dick.

And sure enough, with waving plumes there came what seemed a veritable horde of mighty warriors, grim and savage, pouring out of the nearby forest.

"They are not Bagalla," said Ukundo.

"Look!" cried Doc. "There's a white man leading them."

"It is Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle, and his mighty Waziri!" exclaimed Ukundo.

"Tarzan?" shouted Dick. "Yes, it is Tarzan. We are saved!"

The Bagalla, warned now by the savage war cry of the Waziri, turned in their direction. At sight of Tarzan and his warriors the ranks of the Bagalla were thrown into confusion.

They forgot their prey and thought only of escape, for well they knew the power and the wrath of Tarzan of the Apes. Like

frightened rabbits they scurried for the jungle, pursued by the Waziri warriors, who showered arrows and spears among them. As they disappeared from the clearing, Tarzan approached the boys.

"I thank God that I have found you," he said.

"I did not think you could survive the dangers of the jungle. But when I saw you make your stand against the Bagalla, I knew why you had survived. You are brave lads! In the jungle only the brave may live. I am very proud of you."

Ukundo and Bulala had gone down on their hands and knees before the Lord of the Jungle and now Tarzan noticed them. "Who are these?" he demanded.

"They are our very good friends," said Doc. "Without them we should never have escaped."

"They shall be rewarded," said Tarzan, "when we reach home tomorrow. And so shall you boys. What in all the world would you like most?"

"A whole apple pie," said Doc.

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